

IN HONOR OF THE PUERTO RICAN ASSOCIATION FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, INC.

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 15, 2001

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to the Puerto Rican Association for Human Development, Inc. (PRAHD). PRAHD is a non-profit organization in Perth Amboy, New Jersey, dedicated to providing health, educational, and social services to low-income residents of Middlesex County, New Jersey.

Since 1974, PRAHD has emerged as one of the premier non-profit organizations in the State of New Jersey. This dynamic organization provides a wide range of social services essential to low-income and elderly residents of Middlesex County. PRAHD currently sponsors pre-school child care programs, HIV/AIDS educational services, substance abuse prevention classes, and health care services for homebound senior citizens.

The outstanding success and efficiency of this organization can be attributed to its committed staff, which is working tirelessly to ensure that adequate social services are provided for residents in Middlesex County. PRAHD, which is governed by a Board of Directors and is managed by an Executive Director, currently employs 38 full-time and 74 part-time staffers. It is also supported by the diligent efforts of numerous community leaders, who volunteer their skills and services.

As a result of its hard work, PRAHD has vastly improved the standard of living for thousands of New Jersey families.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring PRAHD for its service to the community of Perth Amboy and for its countless acts of kindness and compassion.

HONORING VERNE L. WIKERT

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 15, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Verne L. Wikert and his contributions to this country. Verne began his service to this nation in the 1940's, serving as a Merchant Marine in the Pacific theatre during World War II.

Mr. Wikert joined the Merchant Marines at the age of seventeen. Tasked with the position as oiler aboard the S.S. Coast Trader, Verne and his crew were responsible for supplying the Pacific theatre with troops and supplies throughout the war. On June 7, 1942, a Japanese submarine torpedoed his ship. Following the attack, Verne fought his way from below deck to escape the sinking ship. This event put the crew through a five-day ordeal, fighting for their survival off the coast of the state of Washington. Upon rescue, Wikert, in a coma, was near death.

Mr. Wikert recovered from this experience and continued his service to his country, surviving two more torpedo attacks before the end of the war. As is customary in the Merchant Marines, he received no awards or

decorations for his contributions to the war effort, but is worthy of the praise of this body of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege to honor Verne L. Wikert for his service to this country. He served selflessly during a time when the country was in great need. His actions have brought great credit to himself and his nation.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT PRESIDENT ISSUE PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING A NATIONAL LAO-HMONG RECOGNITION DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2001

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 88, a resolution urging the President to issue a national proclamation recognizing the important contributions of Hmong and Laotians to our great nation.

Unfortunately, few Americans know that many Hmong and Lao people came to the United States as refugees fleeing genocide and persecution for fighting against the spread of communism in Laos, a country once part of the French colony known as Indochina, which also encompassed Cambodia and Vietnam.

Following the French rule over Indochina from 1863 until its withdrawal from the region in 1954, the United States became involved in the struggle for democracy and independence for Indochina from 1955 to 1975. During this period which became known as the Vietnam War, the United States recruited Hmong and Lao people to fight against the communist Vietnamese Army and the Pathet Lao. Hmong and Lao soldiers flew thousands of deadly combat missions in support of the U.S. Armed Forces and the Central Intelligence Agency, and fought in conventional and guerrilla combat clashes with extreme casualties against communist Vietnamese and Pathet Lao. More than 35,000 Hmong and Lao soldiers lost their lives in defense of democracy and many more were seriously injured and disabled.

After the United States pulled out of Vietnam in 1975, many of the Hmong and Lao soldiers and their families were forced to live in communist concentration camps known as "reeducation camps" by the Pathet Lao. While in these camps, thousands of Hmong and Lao people were subjected to chemical bombings, tortures, and genocidal murders. Many eventually escaped to refugee camps in Thailand and some refugees fled to the United States. It is estimated that between 1975 and 1995, the communist Pathet Lao government killed more than 300,000 people in Laos, including the Royal Lao family.

Only in recent years have we begun to recognize and commemorate the contributions thousands of Hmong and Lao Americans have made during the period of the Vietnam War. In the 106th Congress, Congress passed the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act introduced by our esteemed former colleague the late Congressman Bruce Vento, which expedited naturalization procedures for Hmong and Lao refugees who fought in the special guerrilla units in Laos.

Today nearly 195,000 Hmong and 135,000 Lao Americans live in the United States. Large Hmong and Lao communities have been established in parts of California, Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Carolina and Colorado.

In closing, I would like to congratulate Congressman Tancredo for his work on this legislation and urge my colleagues to stand in strong support for the passage of H. Con. Res. 88.

68TH ANNIVERSARY OF FAMINE-GENOCIDE IN UKRAINE

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 15, 2001

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, as Co-Chair of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus, I rise today to commemorate the memory of millions of innocent victims ruthlessly murdered at the tyrannical hands of Joseph Stalin and other Soviet communists. This year marks the 68th anniversary of the Famine-Genocide perpetrated by Stalin in an attempt to subjugate the people of Ukraine.

In order to achieve his vision of a strong industrialized Soviet Union, Stalin sought to force Ukraine into compliance. However, his policy of forced collectivization was strongly resisted by the freedom-loving peasantry. In an effort to break the spirit of the Ukrainian people, Stalin used food as a weapon, starving between six and eight million people to death, while confiscating and exporting massive quantities of grain. This was a naked act of genocide against Ukraine and her people.

The famine was entirely the creation of Stalin's totalitarian policies. The Communist State's prohibition of private land ownership and Stalin's excessive seizures of agricultural products created an intolerable life for the Ukrainian peasantry. This situation escalated when state-sanctioned production quotas could not be filled. The quotas were designed to guarantee failure. The failure of quota fulfillment was interpreted, by Stalin, as anti-Soviet behavior, as treason, and acted upon accordingly.

Stalin ordered the Soviet secret police, the GPU (State Political Directorate), later the NKVD (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs), to enforce his quotas by whatever means necessary. The GPU, with the help of local party officials, seized all the available food and seed, rendering the peasantry incapable of producing even enough to feed themselves in the most fertile regions of Europe and Asia. As a result, a mass migration of peasantry loomed. Many sought a chance for survival in the cities, others merely brought their children to urban areas and left them in the hope they would survive, returning, themselves, to their villages to die.

To prevent the migration, the "social parasitism" Stalin implemented a passport system, which forced the peasantry to remain in their villages. Those caught hiding food were either deported to Siberian labor camps or shot. Often, the grain collected would begin to rot while it waited for pickup. Those trying to steal even the rotting grain faced the same fate as those hiding it. Anyone who did not appear to be starving was suspected of hoarding food and faced death or deportation. Unable to eat,

under penalty of death, the peasants starved to death.

The fate of these victims is a lasting testament to the failure of the Soviet system. Stalin's quote, "a single death is a tragedy, a million are just a statistic," responding to a question about the reported deaths of millions of Ukrainians, is evidence of the horror Ukraine faced.

In 1986, the U.S. Congress appointed a Commission on the Ukraine Famine. After two years, the Commission confirmed these terrible events did occur and constituted an act of genocide against Ukrainians. Over two hundred courageous Ukrainian survivors testified before the Commission. Their testimony is preserved in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. These terrible events must not be forgotten. Because of the courage of survivors and the commitment of those who remember and commemorate this tragedy, they will not be.

PROCLAMATION FOR JAMES LEHANE

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 15, 2001

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to recognize one of New York's outstanding young students, James Leane. This young man has received the Eagle Scout honor from their peers in recognition of their achievements.

Since the beginning of this century, the Boy Scouts of America have provided thousands of boys and young men each year with the opportunity to make friends, explore new ideas, and develop leadership skills while learning self-reliance and teamwork.

The Eagle Scout award is presented only to those who possess the qualities that make our nation great: commitment to excellence, hard work, and genuine love of community service. Becoming an Eagle Scout is an extraordinary award with which only the finest Boy Scouts are honored. To earn the award—the highest advancement rank in Scouting—a Boy Scout must demonstrate proficiency in the rigorous areas of leadership, service, and outdoor skills; they must earn a minimum of 23 merit badges as well as contribute at least 100 man-hours toward a community oriented service project.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the recipients of these awards, as their activities are indeed worthy of praise. Their leadership benefits our community and they serve as role models for their peers.

Also, we must not forget the unsung heroes, who continue to devote a large part of their lives to make all this possible. Therefore, I salute the families, scout leaders, and countless others who have given generously of their time and energy in support of scouting.

It is with great pride that I recognize the achievements of James and bring the attention of Congress to this successful young man on his day of recognition, Friday, January 4th, 2002. Congratulations to James and his family.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO PAUL JORDAN

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 15, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Paul Jordan for his contributions to this country. Paul began his service to our nation in 1942 by reporting for duty as a new army recruit at Fort Logan, CO. Following his training, Paul was assigned as a tank assistant gunner for the invasion of Sicily, Italy in June of 1943.

Mr. Jordan's company supported cover for the 45th Division and served in the initial invasion of Sicily. The Allied success brought Paul to the invasion of Salerno in September of that same year. It was during this invasion that Paul had his first tank destroyed by enemy fire. Paul survived and later was reunited with his company and assigned a new tank. After fighting for three months near Monte Cassino, Paul was assigned to yet another invasion force, this time the invasion of Southern France. Fighting near Cannes in 1944, Paul's tank was again destroyed by an enemy attack. Evading enemy forces once again, Paul was promoted to tank commander upon reaching his unit. The war ended for Paul in Strasborg, France close to the German border in 1945.

Mr. Jordan returned to Colorado in November 1945. He married his sweetheart Ellen and raised three children. He went on to work in the Delta County School District for almost 30 years. Paul and his wife Ellen recently traveled back to France to visit a small village his unit liberated during the war, and to visit a memorial to five of his comrades who died during the fighting.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege to recognize and pay tribute to Paul Jordan for his service to his country during World War II. He served selflessly in a time of great need, bringing credit to himself and this nation. Paul is one reason that our country enjoys the freedom that we hold so high today.

TRIBUTE TO EDDIE BOLAND

HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 15, 2001

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a dear friend and former colleague Eddie Boland. By his own choosing, he loyally served this body for 36 years with minimal national attention. And yet despite his best efforts to remain known only to his constituents and his colleagues, his name carries a familiar ring to a vast number of Americans.

While it was his role as Chairman of the House Select Committee on Intelligence that brought him household recognition, Eddie Boland stood for more than the namesake amendments that helped set the stage for the Iran-contra affair. To his constituents, he was a friend, a steadfast supporter of civil rights and simply unbeatable when it came to the polls. To members of this body, he was an honest, sincere and dedicated man who came to Washington to serve his district and did it well.

It has been over 13 years since Eddie Boland last graced the halls of Congress as a distinguished member of the House of Representatives, but the ideals that he quietly fought for during his tenure have not been lost. I extend my sincere condolences to his wife Mary and their four children.

HONORING SERGEANT JOSEPH BUONOME ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 15, 2001

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to pay tribute to Sergeant Joseph Buonomo who recently retired from the East Haven Police Department after three decades of dedicated service. Sergeant Buonomo led an exemplary career and has left a legacy that will not soon be forgotten.

Joining the East Haven Police Department as an Auxiliary Officer nearly thirty years ago, Sergeant Buonomo was soon sworn in as a full time officer. Appointed Court Liaison and Police Spokesperson ten years ago, Sergeant Buonomo played an integral role in maintaining the Department's relationship with the local community. Throughout the course of his career, he also took on the duties of Hostage Negotiator, Supply Officer and Airport Liaison. His outstanding service has been recognized with more than ten Commendations and two Citations for performing above and beyond the call of duty—a reflection of his unwavering commitment to serve and protect the residents of East Haven. Sergeant Buonomo has certainly been a hero to our community.

Sergeant Buonomo's compassion and generosity extends well beyond his professional career. As a member, Secretary, Vice-President and President for the Police Union Local 1662, he worked hard to ensure the safety and security of his fellow officers and their families. Sergeant Buonomo has also served as the Vice President of the Connecticut Police Association as well as Vice President and President of the Order of Centurions devoting countless hours to these fine organizations. Dedicated to enriching his community, he has also served as Co-Chairman for many charitable events. His commitment to the East Haven community, professional and otherwise, is unquestionable and he has made a real difference in the lives of many.

Too often we take for granted the role of our law enforcement officers; men and women who face risks few of us can truly comprehend. Each day, they must be ready to perform under intense pressure—literally in life or death situations. It is an honor for me to stand today to express my deepest thanks and appreciation to Sergeant Joseph Buonomo for his outstanding service to the Town of East Haven and to extend my very best wishes to him and his wife, Barbara; daughter, Cheryl and her husband, Michael; and his grandchildren, Gabrielle and Christopher as they celebrate his retirement.